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## Correspondence.

### NOTICE TO TRANSIENT READERS.

Readers of *The Art Amateur* who buy the magazine from month to month of newsdealers, instead of forwarding their subscriptions by the year, are particularly requested to send AT ONCE their names and addresses to the publisher, so that he may mail to them, for their information and advantage, such circulars as are sent from time to time to regular subscribers.

### COLORS SEEN BY ARTIFICIAL LIGHT.

J. E., Cincinnati.—Colors as seen by artificial light are very different from what they appear during the day, and even under the electric light, which is said to exhibit the natural hues of each color as effectively as daylight, there is a wonderful difference toward those of the warm colors, the cold ones, or blue colors, being the best brought out. The light diffused by artificial light being yellow, this color is rendered pale, and is frequently lost entirely; orange and red become warmer by this light; reds at night look more scarlet, as they borrow some of the yellow light; crimson looks brighter than by day; sky blue acquires a green tint; dark blue, by absorbing the light, looks almost black; and there is often a difficulty in distinguishing between blue and green; purple becomes redder if it inclines to red, and darker if to blue. Blue, to look well by candle-light, should be of a light tone; and if a dark blue must be used, it should have another of a lighter tone beside it, or be interspersed with white. A bright green, in conjunction with blue, will aid in lighting up the pattern, and is therefore useful for increasing the effect of a carpet or oil-colored work by night-light.

### HOW AND WHEN TO VARNISH.

E. J.—All oil paintings should be left several months, at least, after being finished, before any permanent varnish is put on them, and then there should be just enough to keep the dark, transparent colors looking fresh, and not enough to give a varnished appearance—that would cheapen and ruin any picture. Soehnée's French retouching varnish is good; but, for a more lasting varnish, use the best mastic. It should be thin—like water and not like syrup. Spirits of turpentine may be used to thin it, if necessary. Use a broad bristle varnishing brush, passing it regularly over the canvas without touching any part more than once. Be sure that there is not enough left anywhere on the surface to run and form drops. Hold the canvas obliquely and view it with the light striking across it, to see that no places are missed or over-charged. Leave it to dry in a rather warm, clear air, away from sun, wind and dust.

The following is given by a leading painter as a fair time schedule to allow for the drying of a picture in oil: For a lightly laid in picture, twenty-four hours; for a very heavily impasted one, at least four days, and if possible a week. This is with the understanding that no dryers are used in the painting. All dryers are to be avoided, if possible, as the best of them produce an unnatural action of the pigments in drying. No raw picture should be varnished. A little French retouching varnish will bring the dead color out sufficiently. When the picture is a year old it may be permanently varnished; if you can make up your mind to wait two years to give it its dress suit it will be all the better for the picture.

### THE COST OF LAY FIGURES.

A. T. B.—If it be merely for composing and sketching in your ideas, the lay figure may serve you in giving the proportions, but the action should always be drawn directly from life. The best lay figures are those of life-size covered with stockinet. Those of French make are the finest, and some are wonderfully made, with life-like heads and real hair, and every joint arranged to move as in nature. Such cost several hundred dollars each; but a lay figure of good quality, life-size, moving easily, which may be placed in any position, and screwed to remain so, can be bought for between seventy-five and one hundred dollars. It is covered with cotton stockinet, and has a white composition head which can be painted by the artist himself. A wig of any color may be bought separately to use with it. Inquire of F. W. Devoe & Co., Fulton Street, or M. H. Hartmann, 120 Fourth Avenue, both of New York, for price list and description of all kinds.

### CHEMICAL WOOD-STAINING.

T. J.—Oak may be turned black, so as to resemble ebony, by the following process: The wood is immersed for forty-eight hours in a hot saturated solution of alum, then brushed over several times with a logwood decoction, prepared by boiling one part of best logwood with ten parts of water, filtering through linen, and evaporating at a gentle heat until the volume is reduced one half. To every quart of this from ten to fifteen drops of a saturated solution of indigo, completely neutral, are added. After applying this dye, rub the wood with a saturated and filtered solution of verdigris in hot concentrated acetic acid, and repeat the operation until a black of the desired intensity is got.

### THE ORIGINAL KIT-CAT CLUB.

S. B. F., St. Louis.—"The original Kit-Cat Club in London was a society of thirty-nine English noblemen and gentlemen zealously attached to the Protestant succession in the House of Hanover. The club is said to have originated about 1700, in Shire Lane, Temple Bar, at the house of Christopher Cat, a pastrycook, where the members dined; he excelled in making

mutton-pies, always in the bill of fare, and called Kit-Cats—hence the name of the society. Jacob Tonson, the bookseller, was secretary. Among the members were the Dukes of Somerset, Richmond, Grafton, Devonshire and Marlborough; and (after the accession of George I.) the Duke of Newcastle; the Earls of Dorset, Sunderland, Manchester, Wharton and Kingston; Lords Halifax and Somers; Sir Robert Walpole, Garth, Vanbrugh, Congreve, Granville, Addison, Maynwaring, Stepney and Walsh. Tonson had his own and all their portraits painted by Sir Godfrey Kneller; each member gave him his; and, to suit the room, a shorter canvas was used (viz., 36x28 inches), but sufficiently long to admit a hand, and still known as the Kit-Cat size. The pictures, forty-two in number, were removed to Tonson's seat at Barnes Elmes, where he built a handsome room for their reception. At his death, in 1736, Tonson left them to his grand-nephew, also an eminent bookseller, who died in 1767. The pictures were then removed to the house of his brother, at Water-Oakley, near Windsor; and, on his death, to the house of Mr. Baker, of Hertingfordbury, where they now remain."

### TO STRETCH WATER-COLOR PAPER.

RURAL, Plantagenet, Ont.—To stretch any good quality of water-color paper, such as Whatman's, proceed in the following manner: First wet the paper thoroughly with a damp cloth or large brush. Then spread flour-paste along the edges only, to the extent of an inch or three-quarters of an inch along the margin. While the paper is wet press it down smoothly and firmly on the drawing-board, using the fingers to keep it in place. When dry, it will be found to be tight and smoothly stretched. Before applying the color, it is well first to pass a clean brush full of water over the surface of the paper. Let this dry before sketching in the subject.

### CHINA PAINTING QUERIES.

SIR: Is there any other way of putting paste for raised gold on china than with a small brush? I find it so difficult to do it evenly. It will be lumpy and higher in some places than in others, and I notice on the Royal Worcester ware that it is as even as a cord. I mix it only with turpentine and use it rather stiff. (2) Can Lacroix's colors be used for painting on glass—such as lamp shades? (3) Can dull gold be so used and the glass fired as china? M. W. C., Lexington, Ky.

The paste for raised gold must be applied with a small brush. Practice is required to put it on evenly. The paste must first be well ground with turpentine; a little fat oil is added. You will find full instructions for applying the paste in the directions given for the treatment of the Royal Worcester design in the present number of the magazine. (2) Mineral colors are not available on ordinary glass, which would certainly melt in the kiln. (3) Gold used in china painting is of no use unless it can be fired so as to bring it to its proper color: before firing, it is a dull brown.

S.—(1) One, of course, may buy china having gilt bands on it, and decorate it, thus saving trouble and expense; but usually, gilt-edged sets are not of the most artistic style. (2) The cost of firing china depends upon the size of the pieces, their value, and the degree of difficulty in handling them. The prices range from fifteen cents upward. For further particulars write to some of the people advertising in our columns who make a specialty of china firing.

PALETTE.—Dry tinting may be done by dusting powder color evenly over a surface that has been prepared with the oil sold for this purpose. The oil must be used sparingly in combination with spirits of turpentine, and be applied and dabbed evenly over, just as the moist tinting is; then the powder color is dusted on from a large blender. This method is not popular; one feels more or less uncertain of its results until after firing, and it is difficult to use a great deal of powder color without inhaling enough to injure the health.

D. J. F.—Avoid using yellows next to blues, which would produce a green tint. For the centre of blue flowers, which necessitates some yellow, the place must be well scraped before putting the color on.

SUBSCRIBER.—We republish, according to your request, Camille Piton's general rules for figure painting, which are as follows: (1) The drawing must be as perfect as possible, with the shadows and half tints fully indicated; (2) all the shadows of flesh must have gray edges; (3) the darkest parts of shadows are near their edges, the middle being lighted by reflected light; (4) strong shadows of flesh always incline to red; (5) put gray tints between the hair and the flesh, bluish tints on the temples, and greenish tints over the sockets of the eyes; (6) the colors should always be bright and pure, especially in water-color and china-painting; do not mix too many colors at a time; the simpler the painting, the better the effect.

### PAINTING ON VELVET.

S. T.—Cotton velvet, or velveteen of a close pile and make, should be chosen to paint on in preference to the long-piled silk velvet, or plush. Any shade may be selected; most of the old-fashioned painting was done upon white cotton velvet, but that was executed before the soft modern shades of color were, and the present creams, sky blues, and gray-green shades are in better taste, and are better backgrounds to the painting than white. Ordinary water-colors are used, mixed with gum dragon, sal volatile, or spirits of wine, to prevent their running into each other, or sinking too deeply into the material. The brushes are the short, hard ones known as scrubs; they are made with bristles, and have flat bushy ends instead of pointed ones. As the velvet will not bear the pressure of the hand upon it, and cannot well be

painted upon an easel, on account of the manner of the painting, a wooden hand rest is required. It is simply a long bar of wood an inch and a half wide and from twelve to twenty-four inches long, supported at each end by a small piece of wood an inch and a half in depth and height.

### LEATHER STAMPING.

H. S. B. asks: "Can brass hammering tools be used for leather stamping? If not, where can I obtain tools for the purpose? Please give me a few suggestions about the methods of stamping leather."—Yes, provided you use the duller ones. Chasing tools are best for the purpose. Follow the methods used in repoussé work, and be sure to wet the leather well before working on it. An article on the decoration of leather is in type, and will appear as we can find space for it.

### DIRECTIONS FOR FRAMING THE COLORED SUPPLEMENTS.

FRAMING is a matter in which individual taste must have considerable play; still, as we have constant inquiries for directions how to frame copies of our colored plates, we give the following hints for framing the studies given with *The Art Amateur* for the past half year. These will be followed by hints for those of previous issues.

The oil study of ferns (July) may have a flat gilt chestnut frame, not wider than four inches, with simple inside moulding and more ornamental moulding on outside edge. The plate itself may be mounted on a panel with bevelled outer edge, the three or four inches of margin to be gilt.

The August plate—Golden-rod—may also be so mounted. The copy in oils should be framed to suit the position available for hanging it. If there is plenty of space, a wide, open-work Florentine frame, gilt, may be used. A large and simple moulding of gilt wood, bevelling inward, one and one half to two inches wide, will look well where wall-space is more restricted.

For the Birds of Paradise (September), to be copied in water-color, a two-inch mat, cream color or warm white, with bevelled edge, may be used, and a flat frame of chestnut or oak, one and one half inches wide, will look best with it. A flat gilt frame will also look well.

The Stormy Coast Scene, for October, should have a deep gold frame, such as is ordinarily used for oil-paintings.

The Moonlight Marine, for November, may have a gold frame, with shallow inside lip (moulding); the outer two inches either flat or forming a bevel. The water-lilies for the same month may be treated in the same manner, if copied in oil, or may be framed in Florentine style. If copied in water-color, both mat and frame should be gilt. The latter may be two inches wide, the mat one and one half.

The Winter Scene for the present may be framed like the October plate. The study head, the second colored plate for this month, admits of several different kinds of treatment. If copied in oils, it may have a wide and rather flat gold frame of the usual sort, or will look very well in a gilt, oak, or chestnut frame, with or without ornamental mouldings on the inner and outer edges. If in water-colors, either a gilt or a cream-colored mat will look well. A gilt mat implies a gilt frame, which had better be flat. A plain oak or chestnut frame, with narrow gilt moulding or bevel inside, will do well with a warm white mat. Instead of a gilt bevel, the whole surface of the wood may be lightly silvered, but not so as to completely hide the color of the wood.

### SUNDRY QUERIES ANSWERED.

S. H., "KENSINGTON," B., S. J. H., AND OTHERS.—The directions for working the banner design by Mrs. Rhodes, given in *The Art Amateur* last month, were lost in transmission from England, and so we had to go to press without giving them. They have since come to hand, but not in time to use in this number. Next month we shall give them in full.

CANUCK.—Alma-Tadema's palette is as follows: White, Naples yellow, yellow ochre, raw Sienna, brown ochre, cadmium (seldom used), orange vermilion, Chinese vermilion, light red or brown yellow ochres, madder lake (seldom used), burnt Sienna, cobalt green, oxide of chromium, ivory black.

REGULAR READER.—In painting cornices dark colors should be avoided; red used sparingly, blue plentifully. Red, vermilion, carmine or lake may be used in the quirls; blue—ultramarine—on flat and hollow surfaces and gold or yellow on prominent or rounded objects. Intense colors ought only to be used sparingly on small objects.

T. A. F., Bridgewater, N. S., asks the following questions: (1) I have been painting in water-color, in the old method of using thin washes, for some two or three years but wish to take up the modern style. Would Ross Turner's book on Water Color Painting, published by Prang, be of use to me? (2) Whose water-colors do you consider the best? Are those manufactured by Prang considered good? (3) I have a number of small etchings published in Cassell's Magazine of Art which I wish to frame. The margin allowed in the magazine is not enough for framing purposes, so I will have to mat them. What sort of a mat would you advise, and is it better to have it come up to the edge of the etching, or would you allow the engraved title to show? (4) When is that promised article on Frederick Walker to be published? (1) Ross Turner's book is excellent; there is none better for the beginner. (2) The Prang colors are very good. (3) Use a very light buff-colored mat. It is not usual to show the engraved title, although there is no rule against doing so. (4) We hope to publish the article soon.